informed opinion.

>To encourage subsidizing such advertising by promoting its use
>and recommending advertising be put into schools and libraries
>shows the problems that develop when there aren't public principles
>guiding public policy.
>

I do not understand who you think is subsidizing what? Lastly, you seem
to be totally over looking the big picture in terms of it being a rare
opportunity for students to have free utilization of commercial software
such as Juno and MS Internet Explorer for training and entrepreneurship.
Do you propose that students continue to use Netscape software that is
provided freely to schools to (advertising) promote sales?

>
>Ronda
>rh120@columbia.edu
>

Travis

Re: Reality Check

Ronda Hauben (*rh120@columbia.edu*)
Mon, 16 Sep 1996 08:39:05 -0400 (EDT)

Responding to Frank Odasz   (franko@bigsky.dillon.mt.us)

>Will the big communications corporations preempt these budding
>'bottom-up' community networks? Citizens will determine the
>winners through their participation.

But not all citizens have the choice of determining such winners
if they don't have a community network in their area.

And there is a need for government subsidies to support the creation
and encouragement of such community networks as a matter of
national policy (now some such get govt support in the U.S. while
other areas don't)

Forming a freenet or community network in a large metropolitian
area like New York City without government encouragement and support
seems virtually impossible.

Somehow there is a need to oversee what government does, rather than
remove government from the picture as only government can provide
for a broad policy that covers all areas of a country as large
as the U.S.

In the U.S. there are large multinational corporations with powerful
means to promote their interests.

There is a need to have government help citizens deal with these
corporations - otherwise the basic obligations of a society to
provide for the health and well being of the population are lost
out in the pressure of the big corporations to gain what they
can without any regard for the cost to society.

>The reality of the situation is that creating autonomously
>controlled local networks demonstrating the authenticity of
>widespread purposeful citizen participation can only be achieved
>through a "Win-Win" ongoing partnership between the builders, and
>the users, of our emerging National Information Infrastructure.

There is no emerging National Information Infrastructure. There is
the government paid for and built Internet which has been given
over to private entities without any concern for the public
opposition to this giveaway. (This public opposition was voiced
at the NTIA online conference in Nov. 1994 as well as in other
forums such as those help by the former OTA.)

Also, the history of the development of time sharing,
the ARPANET and then the Internet provides valuable lessons
toward broadening access to the Internet. Instead of studying
this history, however, there is a rush to throw out all the

lessons.

Our online book "Netizens: On the History and Impact of Usenet
and the Internet" documents this history and demonstrates
that government support for and even funding of computer
networking has been crucial. Even more importantly, government
oversight over and encouragement of computer networking has led
to a constantly evolving and valuable resource that has now put new
question on the fore such as how to make access to this available
to all. But it seems impossible to do so without looking at
the past history and development and building on it.

>Worse even, are discussions without leadership which are reduced
>to circular hodge-podge messaging, where the same issues are
>discussed over and over again with no one summarizing, archiving
>and disseminating former quality messages and "collected
>knowledge." When value and knowledge are not aggregated, and
>decisions not reached, forward progress is lost.

I agree that there is a need for archiving past Usenet materials
and also discussions mailing list discussions of important issues.

The NTIA online conference has been archived and there is a
summary of it in our online book, but it didn't seem that most
of the people taking up these issues in this online seminar have
been pointed to that material and asked to build on it.

>It is the specific processes by which citizens aggregate
>knowledge and engage in purposeful public problem-solving,
>effectively, that we need to turn our focus. Without a national
>"knowledge collection" effort in understanding how to leverage
>these dynamics effectively, to allow us to define the direction
>forward in realizing our joint potential, we'll continue to
>be...virtually clueless.

But the problem isn't with people.

There is clearly a battle on now, with big corporate interests in
the U.S. trying to grab what they can despite whose expense.

And we haven't figured out a way to make the U.S. govt recognize
that there are citizens in the U.S. (not just customers for
the corporations). Hence the corporate interests are expending
all manner and means to have government entities act in their
interests, and there seem few means for the citizen and the Netizen
to have their voices heard beyond that of the Internet. And thus there
is no real desire for corporate interests to make Usenet or
email available to all in the U.S. but they are interested in
making web access to their ads (or even email access to their
ads) available to all.

We don't want www access to ads, and want to find a way to stop
such commercial ads from polluting Usenet or email.

We want and need to be able to communicate with each other,
to hear our problems and try to help each other find solutions.

That is the promise the Internet holds out, but there is a
need to get government officials like the FCC or Congress
recognize that there are Netizens and citizens who have a right
and need to be heard and it is important that there be such
means available.

Ronda

rh120@columbia.edu

            Netizens: On the History and Impact
                 of Usenet and the Internet
            http://www.columbia.edu/~hauben/netbook/

- ☐ **Next message:** Travis Thompson: "Exploitation versus Utilization"
- ☐ **Previous message:** Travis Thompson: "Re: Free Email"

Exploitation versus Utilization

Travis Thompson (*etechojt@juno.com*)
Sun, 15 Sep 1996 12:47:13 EDT

It occurred to me that many people may not believe Juno is absolutely
free. Even a close friend could not believe Juno is truly free and said
there
must be a catch somewhere. Due the fact our company has made a
considerable investment in research and development of the eTechOJT
Internet & Wireless training program we had to subscribe and use Juno
ourselves before recommending students utilize Juno to earn
installation fees.

Yet, as we discuss there are those who will use Juno and also
Microsoft Internet Explorer to figure out a way to charge new users
exhorbitant and exploitive installation fees for software that is
available freely on the net. In addition, new users without access are
further exploited by salespeople who readily sell unneccssary and/or
soon to be obsolete equipment. A better alternative would be to teach
and empower youth and students how to earn a fare wage for providing
Internet software/access installation, without exploiting new users
without access to download freely. A truly win-win solution to increase
access for those who choose not/can not afford commercial technical
support costs.

As everyone knows this is also the dawn of a new age of integrated
digital, Internet, and wireless technologies. If we generally agree
that universal access to technologies would be more assured in the
hands of our youth than the current commercial vendors; then it is
imperative to provide our youth with practical training opportunities
now to prepare them for the future otherwise we may become lost
immigrants in the new digital world.

Obviously, this is a small window and short term opportunity to
empower youth with such an ideal training and entrepreneurial market
niche, before it is exploited by commercial interests. So if there is
anyone on the list who has any good ideas about how to spread the
word to other high school and college students please email immediately
to Ronnie Benson at: <FutureTech@juno.com>

Thanks to everyone for your time and consideration.

Regards,
Travis

Service subsidies"
- **Previous message:** Ronda Hauben: "Re: Reality Check"

Re: new survey on allocation of Universal Service subsidies

Robert Mammel (*epcs@freeway.net*)
Wed, 18 Sep 1996 17:55:37 –0400

> Rex Buddenberg said:

> A lot of ISPs are definitely shoestring outfits. While there will
> certainly be a shakeout, they won't all be swallowed up by the
> telcos. Indeed, the reverse may be happen in our increasingly
> horizontally integrated information structure -- the telcos
> do what they can do best (provide terrestrial connectivity) and
> the ISPs do what excell in (provide internet services).

> The disconnect that I see here is that the technology to reach
> rural areas is generally provided by companies that are outside
> of the regulatory framework. Because they do not have natural
> monopoly characteristics that would cause the government to
> regulate them. Given the cross-subsidization prohibitions
> in the legislation, we can't use the Universal Service subsidies
> for the technology that is appropriate to the requirement.
> Desire to reach rural areas is not a sufficient reason to bring
> these unregulated companies under regulation. I haven't seen
> anyone on this list illustrate how we get from here to there...
>
> Rex Buddenberg

I think my view of the Internet world and Rex's is pretty similar. I'm not
convinced telcos will be the vendor of choice for Internet access by
libraries, school districts or pretty much anyone else in rural areas.   It
seems more likely that ISPs will purchase a connection to the Internet
backbone and then offer Internet bandwidth in the form of modem dial in,
ISDN dial in, frame relay connections, direct connections and RF
connections to the customers they serve. The telcos will be providing some
of the physical circuits, but school districts and libraries are likely
buying their Internet bandwidth from a local ISP (an unregulated,
competitive, and unsubsidized business). When the ISP is delivering
bandwidth via an RF connection, the telcos aren't even a direct part of the
service being offered to a school or library.

This scenario strikes me as probable unless the libraries and school
districts actually become ISPs and use subsidized manpower, bandwidth,
telco circuits etc. to capture the local market. It's difficult for me to
conceptualize a scenario where even a well managed for profit ISP can
successfully compete against a well managed subsidized non-profit ISP.

The assumption with nearly all the email I've been reading is that the
telcos will dominate delivery of Internet bandwidth and other Internet
services (consulting, training, server setup etc. etc.) to rural areas.
This isn't the case today; why does everyone assume this will be the
scenario for the future? And, if the telcos aren't the vendor of choice
for library and school district Inernet (and possibly other
telecommunication) needs, then what is the value of the "Universal Service"
rate subsidy for libraries and school districts? I also sense a pretty
basic "disconnect" here.

Robert Mammel
Gaylord Michigan

NPTN, FreeNet Org. Folds

Jim Callahan (*jcalhan@sundial.sundial.net*)
Thu, 19 Sep 1996 18:40:56 -0700

NPTN, the organization that holds the "FreeNet" trademark, has
reportedly filed for Chapter 7 bankruptcy (see attached). NPTN
was one of the organizations which testified and filed comments
before the FCC.

Jim Callahan
JCalhan@Sundial.Net

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=======================================================================
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Date: Thu, 19 Sep 1996 16:13:26 -0400 (EDT)
Reply-To: acarvin@kudzu.cnidr.org
Sender: owner-civtalk@ready.cpb.org
From: Andy Carvin <acarvin@kudzu.cnidr.org>
To: civtalk@ready.cpb.org (civtalk list)
Subject: NPTN Announcement (fwd)

I hate to be the bearer of bad news, but....

> To all community networkers:
>
> The following message to NPTN affiliates is being posted
> to various NPTN listserves and to the Communet listserve.
>
>
> The Bad News:
>
> I regret to report that the National Public Telecomputing Network will soon
> be closing its doors permanently. On September 17, 1996, NPTN filed for a
> Chapter 7 bankruptcy.
>
> As most of you know, funding has been a serious problem at NPTN since
> before the resignation of Dr. Grundner in October of 1995. The Board and
> staff have been relentlessly pursuing a number of potential sources of
> funding since that time, but over the course of the past few weeks, each of
> our erstwhile prospective donors has made it clear (in some cases after
> many months of discussion) that they do not intend to fund NPTN. We are
> now well past the point of no return. As a number of our prospective
> donors have made clear to us, no serious funder is willing to make grants
> to an insolvent non-profit.
>
>
> Affiliate Dues:
>
> You may ask why we have not solicited dues from affiliates. As you know,
> Dr. Grundner declared a temporary moratorium on collecting renewal dues
> last October, when it became clear that the ongoing shortage of funds would
> require NPTN to scale back its operations significantly. After listening
> to your feedback on our proposed dues schedule earlier this summer, we

> concluded that our affiliates, understandably, would not be willing to
> resume the payment of dues without some clear sign of long-term viability
> -- i.e., an infusion of money and the resumption of operations at or near
> previous levels. What we did not want to do was solicit dues from our
> affiliates, collect enough from our most loyal supporters to buy ourselves
> a few weeks or maybe a couple months, then close our doors anyway. Given
> the large number of affiliates who never paid their dues even in good
> times, and the number who have expressed doubts about future payments
> (and/or higher payments) in recent weeks, we did not believe soliciting
> dues offered any promise without having other funding in place first.
>
>
> Logistical Matters:
>
> There are a number of practical details to the bankruptcy procedure that
> will affect NPTN and its affiliates. Now that NPTN has filed, the
> organization will be wound down under the supervision of a trustee, who is
> appointed by the bankruptcy court to represent the interests of all the
> creditors. The trustee's authority trumps that of anyone here at NPTN.
> You should realize that the trustee's latitude is narrowly circumscribed by
> the Bankruptcy Code. The ultimate arbiter of any disputes will be a judge
> in the Bankruptcy Court.
>
> Some of our affiliates have been listed as creditors or potential creditors
> in our bankruptcy petition. Those affiliates should receive a notice from
> the bankruptcy court alerting them to the existence of the petition. After
> 90 days or so, those people will receive a second notice that will explain
> how to file a proof of claim with the bankruptcy court.
>
> Those affiliates who believe they are owed money but do not receive a
> notice may contact their local bankruptcy court for a proof of claim form
> which must then be filed with the U.S. Bankruptcy Court for the Northern
> District of Ohio. The address is :
>
> U.S. Bankruptcy Court
> Northern District of Ohio
> 31st Floor
> Key Tower
> Cleveland, OH 44114
>
> The case number is 96-15026 and the Judge is Judge Baxter. The name of the
> case is In re National Public Telecomputing Network.
>
> NPTN will continue to exist for at least a few weeks in order to wind down
> its affairs. However, our telephone service will not be available after
> Sunday, September 22 at 5:00, so those of you with dial-in access will no
> longer have it as of that time. It is essential that you download any
> files belonging to you that you need before this time. Our Internet access
> will terminate by 5:00 Wednesday, September 25. I realize this doesn't
> give you much time to make other arrangements but there is, unfortunately,
> no way to keep our equipment going past that time.
>
> We will keep this listserv open as a channel to you until Wednesday. We
> are looking into ways of reconstituting the freenet-admin listserv after
> our access is no longer available.
>
> Those of you who have not already done so will probably want to subscribe
> to the Communet mailing list, which is a quite active list for community
> networkers. To subscribe to Communet, email to listproc@list.uvm.edu with
> the following request:
>
>   subscribe COMMUNET
>
> For What It's Worth:
>

> Those few of you who stand to lose money as a result of our bankruptcy will
> doubtless be angry about this turn of events. Rest assured, you're in good
> company. Our Chairman of the Board of Trustees will be out a considerable
> sum of money as a result. Another of our trustees has lent us thousands of
> dollars as well. Having unwisely sat on paychecks and advanced expenses to
> NPTN over the past few months, both John Kurilec and I will be out many
> thousands of dollars more than the meager amount of employee salary that
> enjoys a preference over other creditors. There are several friendly
> creditors who have already reduced their fees that will now be out
> thousands, including our attorney, our bookkeeper, our accountants, and our
> consultant Drew Taubman, who worked many many hours in the past few months
> in the hope of salvaging this organization. As you can imagine, none of
> the Board or staff are happy about the consequences of this bankruptcy for
> ourselves, for our affiliates, or for those who have helped NPTN so much.
>
> Not surprisingly, the psychic toll on our Board and staff (and their
> families) has also been extremely high. So if we're a little cranky when
> you call, please bear with us.
>
> The Good News:
>
> Not all the news in the last few months has been bad. I'm very proud of
> what we accomplished, in spite of all our financial problems, during the
> past six months. (Under the circumstances, I hope you'll forgive me for
> blowing our own horn a bit.) The TeleOlympics '96 went well this year
> under the guidance of John Kurilec, who has neither sought nor received the
> credit he deserves for the success of that program every year since its
> inception. (John has been mailing out certificates to the medalists with
> money from his own pocket, since the postal meter is on empty -- all too
> typical for him.)
>
> Some of John's other handiwork as Director of Cybercasting Services was
> acknowledged recently when our NPTN and Academy One websites were selected
> as Three-Star Sites by Magellan. Their reviewer called A-1 "an exceptional
> index" that "careens off the scale in content." (These kudos join the
> Point Top 5% rating for the NPTN website and the selection of the Multiple
> Sclerosis section of our Health and Wellness website as one of the best
> medical sites on the Web for 1995 by PC Computing.)
>
> Ben Stallings came in as a summer intern with a stipend from Intel, learned
> the ResNova software package cold in a week or so, and by summer's end was
> sending bug fixes to the software company. Ben singlehandedly shipped
> seven new Rural systems out the door, provided support for those earlier
> systems having trouble with their software, and did training for a good
> many systems.
>
> NPTN was also in the forefront of the universal service movement this year,
> with the help of Glenn Manishin and Jeff Blumenfeld, our pro bono counsel
> from the noted telecom law firm, Blumenfeld and Cohen in Washington, D.C.
> With their help, NPTN had the opportunity to advance community networks as
> a model for universal service. Our comments to the FCC, and subsequent
> meetings with FCC staff, the offices of two FCC commissioners, and Senate
> staff, attracted the interest of the policy makers, so much so that NPTN
> was invited to (and did) testify before the Joint Board on Universal
> Service. The Board's request for follow-up comments also referred directly
> to our comments. I continue to hope that the FCC will follow our proposal
> to provide seed money for community networks, as the Canadian government
> does.
>
> In addition to these accomplishments, NPTN continued to do the lower
> profile things that support community networking -- like directing a dozen
> or so callers to community networks in their areas every day, and working
> on such projects as Academy One, the Health and Wellness Area, and
> CyberSolon. And we did all of this on a fraying shoestring.
>

> The Big Picture
>
> The closing of NPTN should not be taken as a sign of problems in the field
> of community networking generally. All over the United States, Canada, and
> much of the world, more and more community networks are starting and
> succeeding. Public interest has never been higher in socially constructive
> uses of telecommunications technology. New models for community networking
> and new faces laboring at the grass roots appear each day, with valuable
> contributions to add. Despite the financial, technical, and competitive
> challenges that face community networkers in the coming years, I have every
> confidence that they will continue to bring the Internet to their
> communities and, more importantly, bring their communities to the Internet.
>
> On a Personal Note:
>
> Before we sign off for good, there are many people I will wish to
> acknowledge and probably a few thoughts about the future of community
> networking I will want to share. I'll save those for a future message.
> For now, just this: the people I have met in this field are some of the
> most decent, dedicated and hard-working folks I have had the pleasure to
> meet, and I thank you in advance for the supportive messages you will
> probably send. Any offers of employment for John or me will be cheerfully
> entertained!
>
> Please contact me if you have any questions, comments, brickbats, flames, etc.
>
>
> Yours truly,
>
> Tim Connors
>
>
> Tim Connors, Acting Executive Director
> The National Public Telecomputing Network (NPTN)
> 30680 Bainbridge Road, Solon, Ohio 44139
> tim@nptn.org   216-498-4050   fax: 216-498-4051
> http://www.nptn.org
> Free-Net is a service mark of NPTN registered in the U.S.
> and other countries.

NPTN / Universal Service

Jim Callahan (*jcalhan@sundial.sundial.net*)
Thu, 19 Sep 1996 18:57:59 −0700

```
NPTN Closing Comments on Universal Service
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> contributions to add.  Despite the financial, technical, and competitive
> challenges that face community networkers in the coming years, I have every
> confidence that they will continue to bring the Internet to their
> communities and, more importantly, bring their communities to the Internet.
>Sometimes you don't realize what you have till its gone. . .  :(
Jim Callahan
JCalhan@Sundial.Net
```

Your Opinion Wanted...

Wong, WayJane (*WAwong@smtp.cde.ca.gov*)
20 Sep 96 14:57:26 PDT

Dear Fellow Participants,

I have been trying to keep up with this seminar since it began and have
found it to be very time consuming, but worthwhile to read other people's
viewpoints, questions and concerns. Thank you Information Renaissance.

I work for the California Department of Education. The following ideas
have NOT yet been thru our department's review and approval process.
However, our Unit within the Department of Education formed a small
working group called CCUSAT, which consists of myself, Carole Teach and
representatives from Alameda, Santa Cruz, Los Angeles, and Kern County.
I wish that we could have included more representatives from other
California regions but time would not permit. The following are the ideas
that we have incorporated into a draft that is still being worked on and
I hope to submit as ex parte to the FCC very soon.

I anticipate a variety of responses to our ideas and welcome any
comments, whether they be supportive or non-supportive, constructive
criticism, etc. We are all just trying to propose the best, most
realistic and equitable suggestions that would support the real
intentions of the Telecommunications Act of 1996.

Here goes:

Schools and libraries should have discounts for basic and advanced
services. The discounted services would be achieved through a
competitive procurement process. What has historically been defined as
"basic and advanced services" are not to be construed as separate. All
services, whether basic or advanced, would be available to schools and
libraries as discounted rates and all telecommunications carriers
including internet service providers should be considered as providers of
these services. We define universal services to be that which is defined
for "advanced telecommunications capability" in Section 706. It is
"broadband telecommunications capability that enables users to originate
and receive high-quaility voice, data, graphics, and video
telecommunications using any technology". Universal services should also

Update of Survey Analysis

Laurie Maak (*laurie@hamlet.phyast.pitt.edu*)
Fri, 20 Sep 1996 21:32:15 –0400 (EDT)

Folks,

I thought you would be interested in an update on the results of the
first survey – on Scope of Universal Service Subsidies. If you haven't
done so, please complete the second survey – on Allocation of Universal
Service Subsidies. You can find it at:
        http://info-ren.pitt.edu/universal-service/survey_2.html

Thanks all,

Laurie Maak

===

RESULTS OF SURVEY ON THE SCOPE OF UNIVERSAL SUBSIDIES
        (100 respondents)

1. Purpose:
        (65, 66.32%)   Equity
        (33, 33.67%)   Public Right

2. Educational Needs:
        (34, 34%)   Voice
        (39, 39%)   Video
        (18, 18%)   FAX
        (15, 15%)   Private Data Services
        (94, 94%)   Internet Data Services

3. Breadth vs. Depth:
        (38, 39.17%)   Narrow
        (59, 60.82%)   Broad

3a. If broad coverage:
        (8, 14.03%)   Smaller Discounts for Covered Services
        (49, 85.96%)   Larger Universal Service Fund

4. Services to be covered:
        (98, 98%)   Connectivity
        (50, 50%)   Internal Wiring
        (56, 56%)   Routers and Servers
        (25, 25%)   User Access Devices
        (70, 70%)   Ongoing Upgrades of Telecommunications Capabilities
        (56, 56%)   Technical Support
        (40, 40%)   Staff Training
        (30, 30%)   Assessment of Educational Value

Re: State's Responsibilty for Technology Provisioning

Link Shadley (*lshadley@seasurf.com*)
Sat, 21 Sep 1996 07:09:46 +0000

```
Tom Buckley wrote:
>
> This is my first posting, but i have been follwing along since the
> beginning - I have not seen any postings re the role of the state dept of
> ed (SDE) or any other state agency with regard to technology provisioning
> in school systems.
> Here in CT, the SDE has offered infrastructure grants to help schools equip
> their buildings with wiring so they can deploy technology in a planned
> efficient fashion.  One of the requirements is a board approved technology
> plan.
```

The State of Oregon has an intense planning process underway which
includes education and all other 'communities of interest'. In 1994 a
group of concerned citizens began meeting to discuss the disparity
between rural and urban telecommunication access. We termed it the
'sagebrush and rain forest rebellion'. Those early grumblings led to a
statewide citizens conference involving over 1000 telecommunications
pioneers and has evolved into the Governor's Telecommunication Forum
Council chaired by Gov. Kitzhaber (who actually does chair the monthly,
day long meetings).

The focus has been on 'communities of interest' and the need to share
resources (bandwidth, technology, training, purchasing power &
opportunity) across the traditional boundaries.of education, business,
government, health care and citizens. This has not been an easy task.
Education has traditionaly enclosed itself within fairly high walls.

One of the driving forces here in Oregon was the realization that the
State was paying for 22 separate computer networks and their associated
dedicated leased lines. Each system was using only a small percentage
of the leased bandwidth and none of the systems could
cross-communicate. When we added up the total cost of
telecommunications in the State, it became apparent that changing all
systems to TCP/IP compatibility and pooling circuits would allow us to
afford deploying local connectivity everywhere in the State. Our
legislature passed SB994 which mandated that conversion.

Habits and tradition die hard. In spite of that mandate, some people
within the education community have continued to build out their own
education only network, duplicating hardware and bandwidth. Urban areas
don't see much worth in our arguments, and that's OK. But small rural
towns suffer. We have many localities which are extremely remote. They

are working to bring the first toll free POP into their telephone
exchange. Some educational agencies are also working to bring
connectivity into rural areas. The problem occurs when the school
decides to bring in this 'education only' network. Suddenly there is
the need for two POPS, two data circuits, two of everything, one for the
school and one for the rest of the community.

Turf and boundaries must be dissolved, or at least grayed a little, to
allow the full 'community of interest' to cooperate and pool resources.
Why should the school pay for the separate network? Why should public
dollars subsidize only one segment of the community? In towns where
there has been a spirit of cooperation, we have found there are enough
private citizens, businesses and organizations wanting access to cover
the costs of data circuits, hubs and routers. The schools gain
connectivity at substantially reduced costs and they are able to develop
greater bandwidth and service.

In summary, I would ask our participants on this list to look out their
window, across the school yard, over the fence and begin to wonder who
else out there in the community is interested in telecommunications and
how could we partner with them to pool resources and improve access and
reduce costs.

For more information on Oregon's developing strategy, check out:
http://www.das.state.or.us/OTF/govrpt.htm

Thank you for listening.
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Paperwork Reduction

Christine Rademan (*cradema@libby.litchpkeld.k12.az.us*)
Sat, 21 Sep 1996 08:56:08 +0000

One way universal service could benefit taxpayers is in paperwork reduction. It is already possible to take roll and report attendance electronically. (Old habits die hard, so my district continues to transfer all that information to paper registers, which then must be stored for years!)

The Federal Migrant Program and a number of California educational institutions have been working on a universal K-University student record that could be shared instantly throughout the U.S. whenever students move.

The AZ State Education Department is moving toward having all educational reporting done electronically. Data collection, sorting, and reporting could be as fast and versatile as the database program.

The "jute box," a CD-ROM periodical collection, makes having a collection of journals/periodicals as simple as ordering a collection of CD-ROM disks. Royalties are paid as a part of a $.25/page printing fee, and the user accesses the system through a terminal. All patrons of a County library system could have "on-line" access for very nominal fees charged to their library card, and the library does not have to sort/store bulky periodicals.

The savings in bulk paper costs, as well as repetitive data entry costs, storage, and the length of time needed to physically access a specific piece of paper among 40,000 stored...say one college application received this fall at a large university...could be significant.

Assessing Value of Nets

Frank Odasz (*franko@bigsky.dillon.mt.us*)
Sat, 21 Sep 96 10:14:08 MDT

How can schools and libraries share services with each other and
with other community groups?

An infinite number of possibilities. Micron corp. in Boise, Idaho
gives schools a 50% price break in return for use of a closet to
house Micron's equipment which Micron also uses to sell dial-up
connectivity to local homes.

If we're becoming a K-100 lifelong learning networked society the
institutional distinctions between K12 school-based learning and
home-based lifelong learning will continue to dissolve.

BBN has begun to research school/community cooperative ventures.

How can these activities be structured so as to foster
competition among telecommunications providers?

Design evaluative metrics to measure whose services best promote
lifelong learning, purposeful public problem-solving, "Real
benefits for Real people." Without such metrics, puffery leads
the way with hypeway glitz.

Allow for short term contracts to support the option for changing
providers. Deciding who has the best offering is like painting a
moving train. It will be the value-added training, resources and
services beyond connectivity which determine the best provider.
This has yet to be recognized or thoroughly demonstrated.

What examples exist of effective school/community collaborations.

There's a vast knowledgebase resulting from 10+ years of
community networking innovation. BST has a international
clearinghouse of community networking models, studies, etc.
http://macsky.bigsky.dillon.mt.us/

Curiously, this knowledge base seems to be largely ignored by
govt., corporations and foundations who seem to think they can
reinvent the wheel better, without examining what's been
demonstrated and learned to date. Actually, it appears many don't
know this knowledge base exists.

Does the Telecom Act promote such collaborations or endanger
them?

The Act's impact is a muddle depending on how the "law" is
interpreted and implemented. The full range of options and

opportunities possible are only alluded to by the Act.

How can an enhanced competitive environment help schools and
libraries? Are there new services likely to result? Is dramatic
price competition likely to occur?

Bill Gates, in his last book, says the three biggest emerging
industries are 1. Education 2. Entertainment 3. Social Services.
Put them together and you have "Fun Social Learning." The
anticipated emergence of successful school/community networking
models will deliver easy, online opportunities to engage in
'fun social learning' with emphasis on purposeful skills on
school/community networks. The most benefit with the least
effort, sweetened with humor and sociability.

What structures exist to facilitate community collaborations in
the development of telecommunications infrastructure? Is this
activity typically driven by school districts, municipal govts,
community groups, libraries or other organizations?

I posted my "Guide to Implementation of Community Networks" to
the info-ren archive as an example of the complex variety of
issues inherent in creating collaborative school/community
networks. Since as a society we still hold competitive,
controlling attitudes from the Industrial age and have yet to
embrace the collaborative attitudes required for success in the
present information age, turfism dramatically undermines most
collaborative attempts, as the evidence will show upon
examination.

The very fact that the single best known support entity for
community networks, the National Public Telecomputing Network,
was unable to find govt., corporate, or foundation support is
testimony to the lack of understanding of what school/community
networking is, or how to support it. My NTIA "Bootstrap
Coalition" proposal was a detailed plan to address these issues;
ftpable at 192.231.192.1 /ul/ftp/pub/franko/Bootnarratives

I am currently a member of a group of oldtimers working to create
a national, perhaps international, association to support
school/community networks. Funding support is our biggest issue
despite a stellar group of experts.   .

My best answers as to what needs to happen next to support
school/community networks can be found in the above two
referenced documents.

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  - >>>>>---Big Sky Telegraph--> Welcomes your imagination!
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Survey results

Gerry Hamor (*ghamor@mail.vcnet.com*)
Sat, 21 Sep 1996 23:17:58 -0700

Greetings all,

I find myself in the minority on the narrow/broad issue as I view the
results of the first survey that Laurie posted on Sept 20. Perhaps I need
to express my thinking and get some feedback from some of you who feel
otherwise. I could be missing something; then again, maybe things just look
different from my perspective. So here goes -

On the issue of broad/narrow service: " Should the range of services covered by
the Universal Service Fund be narrow, so that the magnitude of available
discounts can be large, or should the range of services be broad,
which would result either in smaller discounts or a larger Fund?"

I work at the school level and personally instruct a group of elementary
students in the use of the web and html so their thoughts could be expressed
online. It is very tempting to look at the new law and say; "Let's get
everything we can for our kids. Let's get the telco's to hook us up with the
fattest pipe possible, set up LANS, supply us with computers, maintain our
equipment, and inservice our staffs in the use of telecommunications." But
there's a price for this level of service, and I'm not sure where that's
going to land.

When I established our district's first website a year ago, I figured others
were just a step behind. The gap is bigger than that. When I talk to parents
about their student's work online and they tell me that while they have a
home computer (if they have a home computer, and I live in a fairly affluent
area with an enviable pc/household ratio), they haven't worked online
service into their home budget yet - that bothers me a lot. We cannot let
the cost of Universal Service put a burden our parents that keeps their own
access to online service out of reach.

While I would dearly love to see computers in every classroom utilizing
online resources on a daily basis throughout the district, I am not ready to
reallocate our already scant resources to pay for the increased services at
the district level. As a community, we can work in various partnerships to
provide internal wiring, computers, and inservicing. IMO, from the telcos,
we need connections that meet our changing needs and an e-rate that gives
our students the ability to work online without sacrificing some other
aspect of their schooling. Can that be done without imposing major burdens
on others? Even though I am advocating a narrow position, there is no doubt
in my mind that it will require a much larger universal fund than currently
exists.

Regarding positions taken in WayJane Wong's message:

"All services, whether basic or advanced, would be available to schools and
libraries as discounted rates and all telecommunications carriers
including internet service providers should be considered as providers of

these services."

If we require service from ISPs, they will need access to the Universal
Fund, or at least be able to pass on their costs of providing ports to the
telcos, to whom they pay line charges, since it is the telcos who DO have
access to the Fund.

"A new agency, whether it be at the national level, state or both, needs
to be formed. This new agency would embody equitable representation from
various interests such as education, libraries, health care, the
community, local government, the business sector, the
telecommunications industry and the State Commission. They would be
empowered to establish accountability measures, establish a competitive
bidding process to leverage Universal Services Fund, qualify
institutions who would submit their requests, provide funding incentives
and monitor various activities."

Wait a minute! Not more bureaucracy! Just connect us and give our students
access. Save the money needed for the new agency and use the resources to
buy computers, hook up LANS, inservice local folks. Unless, of course, the
new agency was a virtual agency that did not require travel costs, meeting
rooms, lodging, materials...everything could be online! But even if that
were possible, we don't need the regulation.

Nothing irritates me more than to hear that somebody from the national
school lunch program is flying in to monitor the way we check names off a
list of children receiving lunches, or that a state auditor will be coming
to town to check if our ASB used numbered tickets at a Friday dance so that
all receipts could be properly accounted for. Give me a break!

"A base line would be established for the educational discounts which may
result from the bid process."

I know the bid process fosters competition, one of our focus topics this
week, but I'm real uneasy about this. It's obvious from reading the
submissions by the telcos to the FCC proceedings that their respective
profit margins are highest on their respective agendas. What if all the bids
result in higher than normal rates for schools and libraries? We're not in
position to debate the issue of REAL COST. We ARE in need of access.

A few months ago a long-distance telco rep called and convinced my wife, who
was really not thnking about the issue, to ·switch long distance carriers at
our home. A week or so later, our existing carrier sent a check that we
could take to the bank if we switched back. This month, our local telco
announces that they will soon be offering long distance service; our
existing long distance carrier sends a cash offer to stay with them. This is
already a pretty competitive environment! At the school level, I don't want
to mess with this.

If the local competion results in a hodge-podge of telco service providers
in a given school district, let the percentage of units serviced by the
providers determine which provider (the highest percentage) serves the
schools and libraries and gets reimbursed for its costs from the Fund. Local
ISPs could deduct their costs of providing ports from their own phone line
bills.

I guess it boils down to this: our schools and libraries have a public right
to be connected to the online world and to use those connections-free- in
their efforts to produce the next generation of educated citizens. Let's
keep it as simple as possible.

Gerry Hamor
http://www.vcnet.com/doscaminos/

☐ **Next message:** <u>Ken Hammer: "Aggregation and Competition"</u>
☐ **Previous message:** <u>Frank Odasz: "Assessing Value of Nets"</u>